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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/651,127	08/30/2000	Petter Bragd	010315-089	1058
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EXAMINER

ANDERSON, CATHARINE L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3761

DATE MAILED: 04/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/651,127	BRAGD ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	C. Lynne Anderson	3761	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 November 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,6,11,12 and 15-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,6,11,12 and 15-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 25 November 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

Rezai teaches the use of a cellulosic foam instead of a cellulosic fibrous web to provide the improvement of a higher wicking rate. Therefore, modification of the absorbent article of Graef with the regenerated cellulosic foam material of Rezai would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide such an improvement to the article of Graef.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-6, 11-12, and 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Graef et al. (6,518,479) in view of Rezai et al. (5,713,881).

With respect to claims 1, 5, 14, 15, 17, and 18, Graef discloses all aspects of the claimed invention with the exception of regenerated cellulose. Graef discloses an absorbent structure, as shown in figure 3, comprising a cellulosic material which comprises two integrated layers 10 and 30, the layers being formed by placing one on top of the other before they are completely dry, as described in column 18, lines 1-33. The layers partially penetrate each other such that there is no clear partitioning between the layers, as described in column 6, lines 38-44. The layers have different pore sizes, as described in column 5, line 67 to column 6, line 3. The absorbent structure comprises cellulose, as described in column 7, line 38 to column 8, line 63.

Rezai discloses the use of regenerated rayon cellulose foam, or viscose, in an absorbent article, and further discloses compression of the cellulose, in order to provide a higher liquid wicking rate, as described in column 21, lines 18-25.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to make the cellulose material of Graef compressed regenerated viscose cellulose, as taught by Rezai, to provide a higher liquid wicking rate.

With respect to claim 2, the foam material also contains superabsorbent materials, as disclosed in column 8, lines 64-66.

With respect to claim 3, each layer comprises a different amount of superabsorbent material, as disclosed in column 6, lines 15-17.

With respect to claim 4, the layer that has the smallest pore size, as disclosed in column 5, line 65 to column 6, line 1, has the highest amount of superabsorbent material, as disclosed in column 6, lines 15-17.

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With respect to claim 6, the foam material of the layers comprises different polymers, as disclosed in column 18, lines 14-17.

With respect to claim 11, Graef discloses an absorbent article comprising a liquid permeable topsheet 16, a liquid impermeable backsheet 18, and an absorbent structure therebetween, as shown in figure 7.

With respect to claims 12 and 16, the absorbent article is a diaper, sanitary napkin, or incontinence guard, as disclosed in column 15, lines 9-13.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to C. Lynne Anderson whose telephone number is (571) 272-4932. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on (571) 272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

UWA
cla
April 3, 2006

TATYANA ZALUKAEVA
PRIMARY EXAMINER

